

QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

Questions are listed in the order in which they were received. The time allowed for this agenda item will not exceed 30 minutes. Should any questioner not have received an answer in that time, a written answer will be provided.

Questions	Answers
<p>1. COUNCILLOR STEWART LILLY</p> <p>At the full Council meeting on 10 September 2013, this Council unanimously supported a motion “to examine the probability and merits of installing solar and other energy generating systems on Council owned property. This to include Schools, offices, fire stations and similar”. (Minute 71/13 refers). Can Council please be updated as to the progress that has been made and when a report can be expected? In times of limited budgets, there has to be economic benefits to this Council.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR NICK CARTER, CABINET MEMBER FOR BUSINESS & CUSTOMER SERVICES</p> <p>I provided a briefing when Cllr Lilly asked a similar question in November. I can add that more than 30 schools have signed up to the OxFutures solar PV offer. In addition, in January, the Capital & Asset Programme Board has approved a total of five invest-to-save energy projects to the value of £733k. All of these schemes include solar PV, in addition to other measures.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>I thank Councillor Carter for his response and it is good to see that already in excess of £700,000 is likely to be saved as a result of aspects going forward. What other projects are currently being considered? A lot of Conservative authorities throughout the UK are coming up with some wonderful initiatives.</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>I undertake to give Councillor Lilly a full and exhaustive response in writing. All I would say at the moment is that I am not aware of any large scale wind farms.</p>

Questions	Answers
<p>2. COUNCILLOR NEVILLE HARRIS</p> <p>To the best of my knowledge there is no legal requirement on householders, landowners or developers to report the presence of Japanese Knotweed, Giant Knotweed or the knotweed hybrid (<i>Fallopia japonica</i>, <i>Fallopia Sachalinensis</i> and <i>Fallopia x bohemica</i> respectively) to either DEFRA or local planning authorities. Nor is there a legal requirement for them to seek to control plants on their property other than in terms of stopping its spread to other property.</p> <p>Bearing in mind the foregoing together with the reported adverse cost implications that the proximity of Japanese Knotweed can and is having on home mortgages and house prices what is the County Council's policy on Japanese Knotweed? What steps are being taken to identify and record its presence in the County and to eradicate or otherwise control it when it is found?</p>	<p>COUCILLOR DAVID NIMMO SMITH, CABINET MEMBER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>“The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 states that it is an offence to "plant or otherwise cause to grow in the wild" any plant listed in Schedule nine, Part II of the Act. This lists over 30 plants including Japanese knotweed, giant hogweed and parrot's feather. The police are responsible for investigating this offence and each police force has a wildlife liaison officer who can be contacted. (call 101)</p> <p>Our highway inspection team statutory inspectors are responsible for identifying Japanese knotweed when carrying out inspections of the network. If it's not on the highway they can speak to the residents, owners or agents, leave a leaflet we obtain from the Environment Agency or an OCC headed form informing them of our suspicions. We have no power of entry to inspect.</p> <p>If we receive information from the public about possible sites our local highway representatives attend and take similar action if it's off the highway network.</p> <p>If the Japanese knotweed is on the network our OCC staff will arrange treatment to eradicate it. Japanese knotweed is sensitive to a range of herbicides. The most effective time to apply herbicides to Japanese knotweed is in late summer. This is much more damaging to the underground rhizome system than applying herbicides in spring. We spray for 3 consecutive years. A qualified person from our partners workforce will carry out the treatment and contractors (if used) must have a National Proficiency Tests Council (NPTC) certification.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>I would like to thank Councillor Nimmo Smith for his answers. Please could future answers be written in plain language.</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>I shall pass on the comments and try to make sure that plain English is used on future occasions.</p>

Questions	Answers
<p>3. COUNCILLOR NEVILLE HARRIS</p> <p>What is the total amount of cut Japanese Knotweed material and soil contaminated with its virulent and long lasting rhizomes, imported into the County or otherwise, being disposed of in waste disposal sites/facilities in Oxfordshire? Which sites are involved? How much of this total is being disposed of within five miles of the OCC Didcot Ladygrove Division?</p>	<p>COUCILLOR DAVID NIMMO SMITH, CABINET MEMBER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>In respect to your specific question about Oxfordshire we do not remove and dispose of Japanese knotweed we treat it at site if it's on highway land using a 3 year spraying method which has significantly reduced regrowth.</p> <p>The Environment Agency is responsible for ensuring that knotweed waste is managed and disposed of in accordance with the knotweed code of practice. http://cdn.environment-agency.gov.uk/LIT_2695_df1209.pdf</p> <p>However below is a summary of how we have treated Japanese Knotweed on closed landfill sites in the past.</p> <p>Viridor - Ardley - very limited tonnages of knotweed contaminated soils in at Ardley but as these have the same EWC as most other soils, we cannot run a report for the tonnage of knotweed contaminated waste only.</p> <p>FCC – Sutton Courtenay - soils contaminated with Japanese Knotweed at <5% were 2,500t in 2013. None of the above tonnage was pure knotweed and is only accepted providing we have the depth of void to be able to bury on deposit in accordance with E A guidance for Japanese Knotweed.</p> <p>FCC – Dix Pit - soils contaminated with Japanese Knotweed at <5% were 900t in 2013. soils contaminated with Japanese Knotweed at <5% were 2,500t in 2013. None of the above tonnage was pure knotweed and is only accepted providing we have the depth of void to be able to bury on deposit in accordance with E A guidance for Japanese Knotweed.</p> <p>Agrivert - not permitted for any of these weeds, nor have they accepted any contaminated soil associated with them.”</p>

Questions	Answers
<p>4. COUNCILLOR NEVILLE HARRIS</p> <p>I am advised that as at 31 December 2013 the number of people employed in the communication team was 10 (9.4 FTE) with two vacancies and three agency workers. Why is transparency and openness in communicating with the County's residents not the top listed priority of the Communications Team rather than the present: "to enhance the reputation of the Council and minimise reputational risks"? Do you believe that transparency is paramount in all aspects of service delivery and outcomes? Should not the Council's reputation stand or fall on its performance levels as residents see and experience them to be?</p> <p>Do you feel that consideration should be given to separating the media relations aspect of communication from the other vital work carried out by the department? Which of the current safeguards do you think are most effective in ensuring that the narrow line between minimising the risk to the reputation of the County Council and protecting the reputation of any ruling political party is not inadvertently crossed and that spin plays no part in our communications policy?</p>	<p>COUCILLOR IAN HUDSPETH, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</p> <p>I do not consider that transparency and reputation are separate issues. It's unfortunate that the press sometimes pick up on the negative aspects of a story but it is important they have the facts in order to reduce the likelihood of inaccurate reporting and to encourage a balanced account.</p> <p>The media team's role is to provide accurate information and explain the context for stories about council policy and services. Like all council officers, their work is required to be politically neutral under the county council's code of conduct.</p> <p>Council communication also adheres to the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity. This is statutory guidance produced by Government as part of its policy of encouraging councils to be more transparent and accountable. It requires council communications to "avoid anything likely to be perceived by readers as constituting a political statement".</p> <p>(For information, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government is keen to see this guidance made legally enforceable, though I have no doubt we already comply with the code. The Code, and the Council's own guidance to it issued by the Monitoring Officer, forms an integral part of the Council's governance policies.)</p> <p>I agree transparency is important. In fact, council communication is most effective when it is open and transparent, as we have been about our budget pressures during the public engagement exercise, Talking Oxfordshire.</p> <p>I also do not see any problem in making sure that the hard work of officers on behalf of the residents of Oxfordshire is recognised, including through the media. Should that reflect positively on the ruling group then that is a risk we all have to take.</p>

Questions	Answers
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>Could Councillor Hudspeth assure me that he will look carefully at the publicity that occurs when the chairman is carrying out civic duties and that it will be performed by the Chairman because I have noticed of late that the Leader is performing quite a lot of these things, but he does it very well of course.</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>First of all thank you for the compliment. It might very well be that I have had to stand in on a couple of occasions, but certainly the Chairman of the Council is always the civic leader and we always ensure that the appropriate publicity is arranged and that he gets the credit for the excellent work he is doing this year and we look forward the next year as well.</p>
<p>5. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</p> <p>Would the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Highways give an undertaking that he would investigate the possibility of giving a trial to the so called 'Starpath System' that has recently been installed by Cambridge City Council on its Council park pathways with some success?</p> <p>Starpath is a pavement and pathway illumination system that absorbs light during the day and emits a strong glow during the hours of darkness. It is said to be very eco-friendly with light absorbing crystals that are not dangerous and most important cuts the costs of street lighting especially in parks and public areas.</p> <p>Would he give an assurance that he would at least investigate this innovatory lamination process that is recognised as a major cost cutting measure by reducing the amount spent on street-lighting?</p>	<p>COUCILLOR DAVID NIMMO SMITH, CABINET MEMBER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>I have investigated into this on a prior occasion, following a similar enquiry, and have discovered that this is not an adequate substitute for street lighting as it does not conform to the required lighting levels in accordance with the recommendations in the British Standards (5489) for each classification of road type. The other issue is that there is no vertical illuminance to highlight objects in the distance or enable true ascertain of vehicle speeds i.e. barriers, cyclists, person features, colour of clothing etc. The other disadvantage with this material is that it charges during the day but discharges during the night for only for a couple of hours (rather than throughout the night). During autumn / winter months it could pose additional challenges with the potential for falling leaves on the pathways covering the reflective material, or snow in the winter covering the surface preventing adequate sunlight for charging. It is used only as addition to the lighting and not as a substitute i.e. ambient/supplementary lighting.</p> <p>My understanding is that it has only been used in one location, a Cambridge City Council park not on the public highway. Street lighting within parks and public areas are normally the responsibility of the City and District Councils and not an Oxfordshire County Council function."</p>

Questions	Answers
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>Could I thank him for his reply which is full and addresses the issue, but in his reply he says that he has investigated this and it only has limited application. Would he agree with me that a limited application may only be suitable for parks and gardens and particular areas of a city but the report by Cambridge City Council is pretty clear that this actually does have advantages to local government. Do we have to wait until lot of other local authorities have adopted this as a way forward, why not go ahead and actually look in detail at the report from Cambridge City Council. This is an application which is useful even though it may only apply to certain pathways and certain situations.</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>(Cllr Hudspeth) Obviously I am answering on behalf of my colleague. I would suggest he has looked at it and limited application means that there is little benefit. There areas of the Council that he deals with in his department are vast and we have got to make sure that we get the best value for money across the Council, so I think the Cabinet Member has already answered that.</p>
<p>6. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</p> <p>As the Government's 'Green Deal' would seem to have generated only 626 customers in the first year (Inside Housing Vol 22) would the Cabinet Member for the Environment agree with me that the scheme has worked out to be an even bigger flop than the Governments own risk assessment papers predicted.</p>	<p>COUCILLOR DAVID NIMMO SMITH, CABINET MEMBER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>Councillor Williams will be aware that Edward Davey, the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, has acknowledged that the conversion of Green Deal assessments into finance plans has been "disappointing"^[1].</p> <p>The Councillor will also be aware that there have been over 145,000 Green Deal Assessments in little over a year. Over 80% have already acted on their assessment, or are seriously considering having the work done to improve their home's energy</p>

^[1] Edward Davey speech to Ecobuild conference, <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/edward-davey-speech-to-eco-build-conference-making-britains-homes-warmer-greener-and-cheaper-to-heat>, accessed 24 March 2014.

Questions	Answers
<p>Given the £34million pounds of taxpayer's money used to market and administer this total failure, would the Portfolio holder agree with me that £80,000 per household insulated is a scandalous waste of taxpayer's money. This of course takes no account of civil service time in devising the policy and other associated costs.</p> <p>Would he also agree with me that if the Government had followed the Green Party recommendation of interest free loans rather than giving into pressure from the banks to have the government scheme more expensive than the loans they provide there would have been over a million more homes well insulated by now, CO2 emissions would have reduced significantly and household bills would have been cut dramatically.</p> <p>Could I ask will he be using his good offices with his friends in the Con /Dem Government to ask them to adopt the Green Party policy and do something that will actually work?</p>	<p>efficiency. The first six Green Deal Communities projects have just been approved to benefit 5,500 homes. In addition, 450,000 homes have already benefited from the associated ECO scheme. Many of these are households in fuel poverty, who have not had to pay for their improvements.</p> <p>I take the view that the Councilor's sums ignore the inconvenient evidence to make his point just as the Green Party policy on interest free loans ignores the cost to the nation, at a time when all expenditure is being rigorously scrutinised.</p> <p>The Government has already made changes to the Green Deal and ECO schemes and is planning more, as it learns from experience. We will be supporting practical changes which work, with sums that add up.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>Would you make recommendations to the Government to say that the only way forward is to have a rate which is lower than anybody can get from their local bank or building society. As long as it remains higher, then the number of people who take up this option will always continually be low.</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>(Cllr Hudpseth) obviously if you read it – free loans ignores the cost to the nation and there is a cost eventually somewhere along the line and its who pays for that cost and I believe it should be the people who are actually using the service.</p>

Questions	Answers
<p>7. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</p> <p>Islington and Southwark Councils in London became the first local authorities in the country to formally sign up to the UNISON Ethical Care Charter in December 2013.</p> <p>The Charter sets minimum standards to protect the dignity and quality of life for people who need homecare. It commits councils to buying homecare only from providers who give workers enough time, training and a living wage, so they can provide better quality care for thousands of service users who rely on it.</p> <p>Would the Cabinet Member give an undertaking that Oxfordshire County Council will be signing the UNISON Ethical Care Charter?</p> <p><i>Details of UNISON's ethical care charter can be found at</i> http://www.unison.org.uk/upload/sharepoint/Research%20Material/Final%20Ethical%20Care%20Charter%20PDF.pdf</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JUDITH HEATHCOAT, CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE</p> <p>Oxfordshire County Council welcomes Unison's Ethical Care Charter which is very much in line with our approach. OCC believes that all people receiving care should be treated with dignity and respect.</p> <p>In 2013 we developed a Home Care Customer Standards Charter in consultation with people that use this service (attached). The Standards were recently published as part of our Home Support Market Position Statement and they have been circulated to all our contracted providers. They form the basis on which we are judging customer satisfaction with this service. We are now working to develop Customer Standards for Care Home Services and will be expanding into other service areas in the coming year.</p> <p>We understand the crucial role that commissioning authorities play in making sure that service providers deliver quality. In order for this to happen they need to treat their staff properly.</p> <p>When it comes to employment the precise terms and conditions used are a matter for the employer and employee, and it is of course the employer's responsibility to make sure that they are abiding by legislative requirements. Requirements under areas such as National Minimum Wage are regulated by HMRC.</p> <p>We recognise that a provider needs to be remunerated sufficiently to pay their staff and deliver a good quality service. To ensure that this is the case our procurement processes require agencies to declare how they calculate their hourly rate.</p> <p>The cost components we ask for include elements for an employee's pay, training, downtime and travel. We ask for this information so that we can be sure that any bid received is a viable bid and that our requirements for quality can be delivered.</p> <p>Recently the United Kingdom Home Care Association published a report that</p>

Questions	Answers
	<p>advocated a minimum price of £15.19 per hour.</p> <p>In Oxfordshire the current average hourly rate we are paying across all client groups is £19.11 per hour.</p> <p>Finally Members will be aware that we are investing more money in home support services in the coming year. An additional £800k has been set aside for social care that will ensure that no home care visit is too short for the person to be treated with dignity and respect and with this in mind we will be removing all 15 minute visits for personal care.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>Will you sign the Ethical Charter, is the answer yes or is it no? You have said that our standards comply with the charter, so why will you not give a commitment to sign the UNISON Charter.</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>I do not feel that we as an Authority need to sign the Ethical Care Charter because the work that we are doing with delivery of services recognises that we need to ensure that people who receive care from us are receiving care of a particular standard and that the people delivering that care are also delivering it in a way that they are receiving training that they receiving a wage that is good. If you look at what I have put in the answer, I have mentioned that a nationally the minimum rate is £15.19 and that we are paying an average of £19.11 so I feel that we are already fulfilling the requirement of this so call UNISON's Ethical Care Charter. We are already doing that Chairman.</p>
<p>8. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</p> <p>With growing academic evidence that child poverty in Oxfordshire is growing and becoming endemic is this Council willing to take the lead in initiating an Oxfordshire Child Poverty Commission.</p> <p>This Council could follow the example of other local authorities in supporting and contributing to</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR MELINDA TILLEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION & FAMILIES</p> <p>We increasingly focus our diminishing resources on support for those children, young people and their families who are vulnerable, a significant proportion of whom also experience poverty.</p> <p>At a time of stretched resources it would not be cost effective to set up the local Commission as suggested. We are always alive to the lessons being learnt by others, most of which are likely to be of universal application.</p>

Questions	Answers
<p>a local Commission that would incorporate representatives of local authorities, the NHS, the Police, faith based charities, the Citizens Advisory Boards, schools and community reps reflecting a range of organisations concerned with child poverty. The Commission's primary role could be to research local evidence of child poverty and to make holistic cross service recommendations to public authorities and private providers as to how they should respond to the multiple range of problems that are exposed.</p> <p>Is the portfolio holder willing to adopt this idea of a local Commission or at least to investigate the idea?</p>	
<p>9. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</p> <p>Now that Britain has sunk from 4th to 20th in the World ranking of educational outcomes for 16 year olds over a 30 year period, would the Portfolio holder agree that it is time to learn the central lesson of these league tables ...the more resources a Government puts into state educational the better the final outcomes. Would she agree that continual focuses on reform of the structure of governance (Academies Free Schools etc.) has achieved very little in terms of raising the actual quality of education and is merely a cosmetic ideological diversion adopted by both Labour and Conservative Governments to avoid facing up to</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR MELINDA TILLEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION & FAMILIES</p> <p>Irrespective of our standing in the world let's remember that outcomes for 16 year olds in Oxfordshire have improved, by and large, year on year, both under this and the previous government. Early indications give us no reason to believe that the more recent structural reforms will hinder that progress. As a Council we are committed to supporting those schools which wish to exploit the new freedoms available to them for the benefit of their pupils.</p> <p>The funding available from central government, whether to OCC direct or to schools, directly or indirectly, is a matter of cross- party concern about which representations are made to government as and when appropriate.</p>

Questions	Answers
the real problem...gross underfunding of state education?	
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>Would she agree with me that in a global education market to slip from 4th to 20th in the international league tables is in fact a disaster for the British economy in the medium and the long term? Would she agree that we are now in a situation where outcomes for our 16 year olds measure up to what our economy can achieve in terms of levels of skills, numeracy, literacy and experience and that this cannot sustain and the real reason for that is gross underfunding?</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>I would like to point out that although I agree dropping from 4th to 20th is poor that we are not doing that in Oxfordshire. We are making huge progress in all key stages so I don't agree with most of what he says.</p>
<p>10. COUNCILLOR SAM COATES</p> <p>It is recently reported (HMRC) that numerous employers are not paying even the Statutory Minimum Wage to their employees and that there could be over half a million people nationally underpaid in this way.</p> <p>Could I ask what measures the Cabinet Member is taking to ensure that all contractors to the Council are abiding by at least their basic legal requirements?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, DEPUTY LEADER</p> <p>All employers, which will include those who contract with the Council, are required to abide by all legislative requirements. This includes complying with the National Minimum Wage. HMRC is the enforcement authority for compliance with the National Minimum Wage, not the County Council. The contract monitoring processes within the authority do not include complying with basic legal requirements as it is an employer's responsibility.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>Can I thank Councillor Rose for the answer. What I am worried about here is the issue of things like care workers not being paid for travel time between visits for example. Has the</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>The county council have a contract for all these sorts of outside appointments, and it is up to the employees and HRMC to make sure that everything is legal and above board.</p>

Questions	Answers
<p>Councillor done any scrutinising of contract as to whether people are being paid for that.</p>	
<p>11. COUNCILLOR SAM COATES</p> <p>Peterborough Local Authority have set up their own Public Micro Utility Company (Sky Blue Peterborough) which promises to provide excellent services and return a profits to the local authority - the legal owner. By setting up their own energy utility provider Peterborough have gained the tax break advantages that private providers enjoy and ensured that profits are ploughed back into public coffers in the form of dividends whilst maintaining a degree of independent management.</p> <p>Municipal Energy providers were a common feature of local government before 1945; with rising prices and energy profits generated by the leading private providers they are clearly a prospect that is viable once again.</p> <p>Could the Leader of the Council launch an investigation with a full report to Cabinet as to if this model is applicable in Oxfordshire and whether it would be appropriate to go along this route to dramatically cut costs?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR IAN HUDSPETH, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</p> <p>“Any dramatic savings will require an equally dramatic investment of the Council’s capital. Rather than look back to the last century, the Council is looking forward to this century in partnership with others who are better positioned to deliver this ambition. I would be interested to know what capital projects Cllr Williams would wish to stop, to fund the capital investment required. Is he proposing to reduce capital spending on schools or will he be proposing to stop capital funding of the much needed London Road scheme? I’m sure that residents of Oxfordshire would not agree to such re distribution of limited funds.</p> <p>We have joined the City Council and the Low Carbon Hub to deliver a project called OxFutures, with initial funding of over €1m from Intelligent Energy Europe. The Low Carbon Hub is a non-profit Community Interest Company, which re-invests any surpluses in local energy projects.</p> <p>OxFutures now has a pipeline with a value of over £29m which will be committed over the next two years. The capital for these schemes will come from local private investment and from public share offers. It has already led to the hydro-power scheme currently being constructed at Osney Lock and the largest solar PV scheme in the county on the roof of the Oxford Bus Company garage, convincingly demonstrating the business model.</p> <p>There are more hydro-power projects in the pipeline; the two largest are proposed for Goring and Streatley, and Abingdon. Solar PV schemes include the proposed solar farm at Charlbury, 3.5MW of solar PV with local businesses across Oxfordshire as well as other community schemes</p> <p>Lastly, OxFutures has also been working with local schools. In a little less than six</p>

Questions	Answers
	<p>months, over thirty schools have signed up to have solar PV installed during the summer holidays at no cost to the Council.</p> <p>This initiative will enable the Council to respond to other demands on its capital where there is no alternative provider.</p> <p>The maintenance and non-maintenance bits of the London Road scheme and the bus lane scheme is capital funded; the cycling improvements are a mixture of capital and revenue which I understand is a pretty small part of the overall funding.”</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>I would like to thank Councillor Hudspeth for the answer. What we are talking about here with funding for the County being squeezed by the Government every year, is that we have an opportunity here to get more money on a long term basis by using borrowing ourselves to invest in renewable energy schemes. Why is that not a good idea?</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>I think if you actually read the answer it is quite clear. It is strange that we were paying tributes to Charles Shouler earlier and one of his ethos was be very careful on borrowing and make sure your expenditure is less than your income. As I have stated in the answer, it would include a lot of the capital investment. Where does that capital investment come from? What are we not going to do? Are we not going to do the London Road scheme, are we not going to invest in schools? What do we not invest in to invest in this? I think that the answer to the question it is quite clear.</p>
<p>12. COUNCILLOR SAM COATES</p> <p>Bearing in mind Port Meadow's status as a locally, nationally and internationally significant site with SSSI status and EU heritage recognition, and in support of local MP Nicola Blackwood and Planning Minister Nick Boles' stances of outrage towards the new blocks currently overshadowing Port Meadow and blotting out the view for miles around of the Grade 1 listed St Barnabas church tower and other spires, would the Leader of Council</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR IAN HUDSPETH, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</p> <p>The responsibility for planning is a matter for the City Council; I feel it would be inappropriate for me to comment on this issue whatever my personal views on this development.</p> <p>However I'm sure that the City Council will learn the lessons from this sorry episode and put in place measures that would avoid any future repetition.</p>

Questions	Answers																
<p>support arguments made for reducing the heights of the blocks by at least 2 storeys to restore protected views and the precious atmosphere of Port Meadow, in order that a precedence not be set by these blocks and their devastating impact?</p>																	
<p>13. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</p> <p>What are the most recent figures for the proportion of Oxfordshire residents receiving fully paid NHS Continuing Care? How does this compare to the rest of the country?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JUDITH HEATHCOAT, CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE</p> <p>The most recent published figures for people receiving NHS Continuing Care are for September 2013 and are published by the health and social care information centre at: http://www.hscic.gov.uk/catalogue/PUB13345. The centre report on both people in receipt of continuing health care and people newly in receipt of continuing health care.</p> <p>At the end of September 301 people in Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group area were receiving Continuing Care payments; or 24.9 per 50,000 weighted population. This compares with a rate of 27.6 in the Thames Valley and 52.7 nationally. Of the 211 clinical commissioning group areas this is the 15th lowest rate in the country.</p> <p>In the 3 months from the beginning of July to the end of September 2013, 229 new patients became eligible for Continuing Care payments or 19.0 per 50,000 weighted population. This compares with a rate of 10.7 in the Thames Valley and 19.5 nationally. Of the 211 clinical commissioning group areas this is the 101st lowest rate in the country. The table below gives the summary position.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="875 1299 2009 1452"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2"></th> <th rowspan="2">Weighted Population</th> <th colspan="2">Eligible Patients 30/9/13</th> <th colspan="2">New cases July - Sept</th> </tr> <tr> <th>No.</th> <th>Rate</th> <th>No.</th> <th>Rate</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>England</td> <td>55,799,454</td> <td>58,793</td> <td>52.7</td> <td>21,757</td> <td>19.5</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Weighted Population	Eligible Patients 30/9/13		New cases July - Sept		No.	Rate	No.	Rate	England	55,799,454	58,793	52.7	21,757	19.5
	Weighted Population			Eligible Patients 30/9/13		New cases July - Sept											
		No.	Rate	No.	Rate												
England	55,799,454	58,793	52.7	21,757	19.5												

Questions	Answers						
	Thames Valley	1,942,779	1,073	27.6	416	10.7	
	NHS Oxfordshire	603,378	301	24.9	229	19.0	
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>Could I thank the Cabinet Member for a detailed answer which does hit the nail straight on the head in terms of our position in the league tables. My question is quite simple do you think that being 15th from the bottom of the providers is good enough?</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>Chairman, it says that of the 211 clinical commissioning group areas, this is the 15th lowest rate in the country and the important question that has been asked of me has been brought up at the Older People’s Joint Management Group meeting which was only held last week. I have answered Councillor Williams statistically with the figures in the reply but can I say that we are aware that emergency admissions have increased and that there is work that is going on to look at the numbers of people receiving continuing health care payments. So we are aware of disquiet and we are working to find out the whys.</p>						
<p>14. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</p> <p>Only Oxfordshire people with critical or substantial disabilities receive services or payments under Community Care legislation. Their Carers have a difficult time. What proportion of these Carers receive short breaks (respite care) as part of the assessment for the people for whom they care? How does this proportion compare to the rest of the country?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JUDITH HEATHCOAT, CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE</p> <p>The County Council recognises the vital role carers play in supporting people with their social care needs and aims to support carers to continue in their caring role for as long as they chose. We recognise that most people with social care needs have these needs met by family and friends rather than council funded care. We want to ensure that this remains a positive choice for both the carer and the cared for.</p> <p>As such one of the key priorities this year has been to improve services to carers. We report on each quarter to the Performance Scrutiny Committee. Our specific aims this year were to increase:</p>						

Questions	Answers
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the number of carers known and supported. This is all carers not just those of people we provide a service to. By the end of December we had increased the numbers of carers we support by 8% and were supporting over 15,100 carers • those carers accessing emergency support (this service can support carers by providing replacement care when the carer suddenly or unexpectedly becomes ill, or has an accident which prevents him/her from providing care). By the end of December we had increased the numbers of carers we support by 20% and over 3000 carers were registered with this service • the number of carer's breaks jointly funded and accessed via GPs these are cash payments given by GPs directly to carers. Our aim is to give out 880 grants this financial year, by December we had already given out 721. • the number of carers offered an Direct Payment where we are aiming to pay out over 1900 direct payments this year. <p>In response to the specific question about social care clients and the level of respite care, it should be noted that the threshold for care in Oxfordshire is in line with the rest of the country. 87% of councils in England provide services to people at substantial or critical levels of need.</p> <p>There are currently 7,355 people in Oxfordshire receiving long term services from the council. Of these people 4,552 are in family homes; 2,040 are in care home placements with another 763 in supported living or extra care housing placements (i.e. with building based care provided).</p> <p>So far this year 1017 people have had respite care. This is 22% of people in family homes (4552).</p> <p>There is no comparative data on use of respite care. However in February 2012 there was a national carers survey which asked if people received respite care. This showed that slightly fewer carers in Oxfordshire than England as a whole were receiving respite care. In answer to the question: 'Has the person you care for used support or services allowing you to take a break from caring for more than 24 hours, in the 12 months; 20.5% of carers in Oxfordshire said yes compared to 22.9% nationally. However in Oxfordshire we have championed the use of direct payment</p>

Questions	Answers
	as a way of taking a break to allow the carer more choice over their support. National figures are available for the numbers of carers receiving a direct payment. These show that Oxfordshire provides over twice as many direct payments for carers per head of population than the national average.
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>Council I thank the Cabinet Member for quite a detailed and a good answer, there is clearly some good work going on there but would you agree with me that we need to keep data now on the support that we give to those that we give respite care and who are carers and it is time that we recognise that if we are going to push with our general policy of keeping people at home rather than in residential care. That this will become an ever increasing area of support that the County needs to monitor of a more detailed basis.</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>Chairman, I hate to remind Councillor Williams but he voted against the budget with the investments that were being made for care and I think he should remember that before he asks any further questions.</p>
<p>15. COUNCILLOR JOHN TANNER</p> <p>Will the Cabinet member say what steps he has taken to introduce the Western Conveyance and reduce significantly the risk of flooding in my Isis division in Oxford?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, DEPUTY LEADER</p> <p>As Board Member for the Oxfordshire Lead Local Flood Authority on the Thames Regional Flood and Coastal Committee and portfolio holder for Flood at OCC, I am campaigning for any flood alleviation scheme that will give ANY benefit anywhere in Oxfordshire. The Western Conveyance Channel, when aligned with the Ock scheme in Abingdon, is one such scheme that will benefit quite a few Division on the western and southern edge of the City, including your own. My efforts focus on raising pledges for the £75M shortfall in funding for this project. To date, I have had a one-2-one with the Prime Minister; I met with Brandon Lewis MP at the DCLG; I was with an Oxfordshire delegation to meet with senior flood advisors to the Prime Minister at 10 Downing Street; I hosted a Members Forum on March 1st to which 150 delegates turn out; I hosted a Summit on 21st for any that could help fund the Oxford and Abingdon measures. Positive results to date are a planned meeting of the sponsoring</p>

Questions	Answers
	board and a separate meeting in Westminster with Oxfordshire MPs. Alongside all of this, I am also pursuing other Oxfordshire schemes in places at high risk such as Witney.
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>Thank you Mr Chairman, I think we should all thank Councillor Rodney Rose very strongly. Would he say how much the County Council is putting in to paying for the Western Conveyance</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>I am somewhat lost for words thank you Councillor Tanner for ??????? But at this point in time no we are seeing how the negotiations go and whether other partners are coming in and how much they are putting in and what the shortfall might be if it is possible for the project to go ahead, so at this point in time we haven't got that far with our discussions.</p>
<p>16. COUNCILLOR JOHN TANNER</p> <p>Will the Cabinet member explain why he has not taken action to save money and remove the unnecessary parking restrictions in Littlemore and Blackbird Leys in Oxford, associated with Sunday car-boot sales at the Kassam Stadium?</p>	<p>COUCILLOR DAVID NIMMO SMITH, CABINET MEMBER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>I would refer Cllr Tanner to the responses I gave to questions from Cllr Gill Sanders in December 2013 regarding the residents parking scheme around the Kassam Stadium. At that time I responded that the rules governing the signs and markings for parking restrictions are particularly bureaucratic and for the Kassam CPZs special authorisation was required from the DfT. Any changes to the scheme signing would also require their approval, otherwise none of the restrictions could be enforced. However there is currently a national moratorium on such changes whilst the rules are re-written – as a result our hands are tied. We believe these changes might not be introduced by DfT before spring 2015.</p> <p>In the light of Cllr Tanner's question, officers have again spoken to DfT who have confirmed that the situation is unchanged and that the only way to keep the match-day restrictions is to keep the currently authorised signs.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>Thank you Mr Chairman, would the Leader agree that if the only thing which is stopping these unnecessary parking controls in Littlemore</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>Well as we are now getting into who to blame for the Government obviously the coalition government are having to a tremendous job to take over from the mess that was left behind by the Labour Government and the over-spending and it is important</p>

Questions	Answers
<p>and Blackbird Leys is the national government, that is about time the Government pulled its finger out and would he put most of the blame on the Tories or the Lib Dems.</p>	<p>that next year we don't return the keys to the owners how crashed the car back in 2010.</p>
<p>17. COUNCILLOR JOHN TANNER</p> <p>Will the Cabinet member say what proportion of the targets in the latest Corporate Plan are measurable and SMART and what proportion are not?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR LOUISE CHAPMAN, CABINET MEMBER FOR POLICY CO-ORDINATION</p> <p>Across the Corporate Plan Priority Areas there are 20 'Priorities for Action'. 95% of these 'Priorities for Action' have one or a group of related performance measures. The work in relation to the military covenant does not lend itself to a specific performance measure, so one has not been set. Wherever required relevant reports will be made to members in relation to our work with the military.</p> <p>Some performance information will be reported quarterly as trend information for monitoring purposes and others will be reported against a specific target. Some of the target setting work is still being completed. Where performance is reported against a specific target the target will be clearly visible, together with the relative performance in quarterly performance reports. All of the Corporate Plan performance measures have been considered by both the Performance Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet. The Performance Scrutiny Committee particularly challenged the stretching nature of some of the targets and these have been amended as a consequence. The Performance Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet will continue to examine Corporate Performance on a quarterly basis and relevant performance information will be made available on the Council's public website. A final version of the performance dashboard will be published alongside the Corporate Plan on the public website in April.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>Chairman, would Councillor Chapman be surprised to hear that in the Corporate Plan there are 89 performance indicators of which only 31 are actually measured targets all the</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>Thank you very much Chairman, first of all what I would say is that I am glad now Councillor Tanner knows we do have a Corporate Plan and we have had one for many years. Actually at Cabinet there was a little bit of I tried not to focus on it but he didn't even know we had one in the past. So thank you. And I would also say</p>

Questions	Answers
<p>others are vague hopes or simply reporting and would she explain why they are not attached to the report as it has come to the Full Council because they were to the Cabinet.</p>	<p>don't actually have to have a corporate plan but we think it is a useful tool here.</p> <p>As what it says in the recommendations to Council and do take on board what Councillor Tanner says about having sharp targets, I am all about sharp targets, things that we can measure. I think they are in there, but what we have tried to do is make this a Council Plan in that all departments are signed up to this, all parties are signed up to this in order that we can actually take it forward. So he talks about 89 performance indicators and all the rest of it we are trying to make those local to Oxfordshire in things that we really want to see delivered. It will be actually looked at by the Performance Scrutiny Committee quarterly and the Cabinet will also look at that as well, so quite frankly I think his argument is lost when he didn't even know we had a corporate plan in the first place.</p>
<p>18. COUNCILLOR JOHN HOWSON</p> <p>How many school building projects that are needed for September intakes are behind schedule?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR NICK CARTER, CABINET MEMBER FOR BUSINESS & CUSTOMER SERVICES</p> <p>The nine Basic Need projects in the current programme are delivering accommodation for the September 2014 intake. The provision of adequate accommodation is secure in all cases, even if the entire projects may not be completed by September.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>I would like to thank Councillor Carter for his very well crafted answer, pointing out that the basis needs programmes are delivering accommodation but not necessarily the appropriate accommodation and the properly completed accommodation could I ask him to ensure that as we have more of these basic needs programmes in future years that he will do everything possible to make sure the party of business that our contractors produce the appropriate and necessary accommodation for</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>Chairman I think the appropriate answer to that question yes of course I will do everything in my power to ensure that accommodation is up to scratch and timely I don't think he would expect any other answer to that nor would I want to give another answer. But he must understand is that circumstances shift and change the whole time. What he would have understood had he and a lot of other members of the council supported the facilitation day that I set up via our partners Carillon last week when one of the locations we visited was the Ormorod centre, off the back end of Headington and there are always reasons why programmes might slip slightly and there was a particularly good example there when all the surveys and they were fairly exhaustive had been completed, the building work had begun and low and behold an asbestos dump was then discovered buried deep underground which had to be dealt</p>

Questions	Answers
<p>the start of the school year which is after all well known to be always to be in September.</p>	<p>with as a matter of substantial importance. And anything of that nature to catch people unawares particularly contractors of this nature and delay programmes. All we can ever do is act in the best interest of the school and the best interest of the pupils and plan to provide as good accommodation as possible according to the programme that we set out, we will always have to overcome whatever circumstances our sprung on us along the way. Had he attended that session last week he would have understood that as very particular example but there will be another facilitation day in 6 months or so, so no doubt he will be supporting that one instead.</p>
<p>19. COUNCILLOR JOHN HOWSON</p> <p>What representations have the Council made to the DfE over the paltry increase in funding for education in Oxfordshire announced as part of the funding review?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR MELINDA TILLEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION & FAMILIES</p> <p>The F40 group, which has been lobbying for fairer funding for the lowest funded authorities in England for many years, was invited to attend a meeting with the Department for Education (DfE) on Thursday 20 March 2014 to discuss the funding consultation announcement. Gillie McKee, Finance Business Partner for Children, Education & Families attended the meeting with other F40 colleagues to make representations to the DfE about the methodology used for redistribution.</p> <p>A number of questions were discussed at the meeting about the way minimum funding levels were calculated for authorities, and concern was raised about the difficulty in replicating the calculations so that an informed response could be made to the consultation. DfE said they would issue the individual calculations to each of the authorities that are allocated additional funding.</p> <p>The main area of concern for F40 colleagues focussed on the use of using the school block unit of funding as the basis for redistribution. F40 colleagues at the meeting expressed their grave concerns about using this, instead of considering the total Guaranteed Unit of Funding (GUF) which was used before 2013-14 when the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) was split into Schools Block, Early Years Block and High Needs Block.</p>

Questions	Answers
	<p>Initial analysis suggests that this is why there are some surprising results in the distribution of the £350m additional funding. The use of the hybrid Area Cost Adjustment (ACA) to uplift minimum funding levels also appears to have resulted in large allocations to some authorities that might not have been recognised as particularly poorly funded.</p> <p>Oxfordshire will of course be submitting a formal response to the consultation expressing serious concerns about the methodology used.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>Can I thank Councillor Tilley for the detailed answer to this particular question. It is very disappointing that schools in Oxfordshire under the new funding formula are receiving considerable less than ones on the other side for instance of the Reading border where there is very little difference in North Reading and the area across the Oxfordshire border in the needs of those particular school and it is perplexing to understand how that happen. But can I ask her whether there is anything that the Schools Forum might of done in relation to the dedicated schools grant block that might have helped us out in particular in terms of last year but introducing a sparcity factor for our rural schools.</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>I actually agree with Councillor Howson which is fairly common actually these days. The F40 group have been fantastic in what they have tried to achieve but the schools funding formula is a devil, it really is, and I agree with everything he says. I don't know whether we can still approach schools forum, we could try again about the sparcity factor we can do that, it is there decisions that's not ours we have no control over it accept to go and ask them. I will go and ask them, yes.</p>
<p>20. COUNCILLOR JANET GODDEN</p> <p>The construction of two new classrooms at Botley Primary School was originally scheduled to start in the autumn of 2013, then put back to</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR NICK CARTER, CABINET MEMBER FOR BUSINESS & CUSTOMER SERVICES</p> <p>The delivery of the programmes of work, including the Basic Need programme under which this project falls, is monitored through the Programme Management Office (PMO) who inform OCC of issues through regular meetings and reports.</p>

Questions	Answers
<p>February 2014 for completion in August, now put back to May, with 'practical completion' currently expected in early November – over half way through the autumn term. <u>How</u> did our contract monitoring systems allow this to happen? <u>What</u> steps are being taken to ensure that the Gateway deadline of the last week of March is met, and that progress is speeded up if possible, or at any rate does not slip back any further? Thank you.</p>	<p>The delays experienced by the project at Botley have resulted from issues beyond the control of the project team, including legal matters arising with Thames Water, which have required additional work, surveys and permissions to undertake the main works.</p> <p>At all times the school was informed of the reasons for delays, and the actions being taken, as were relevant personnel within OCC. Steps have been taken to ensure that adequate provision for the anticipated pupil numbers will be in place for September 2014.</p> <p>The target date for the gateway was reported in a recent paper to members and has been scheduled for 3rd April. Provided the scheme presented is acceptable to OCC, the relevant business case will be submitted for final approval. The final business case will include the baseline delivery programme against which the contractors' performance will be measured.</p> <p>The aim of the project is to meet the needs arising from expanding the school as quickly and efficiently as possible, and the focus is always on ensuring there is sufficient teaching accommodation for pupils arriving in September. Progress will be reviewed with the school before the Easter break.</p>
<p>21. COUNCILLOR ZOE PATRICK</p> <p>I was very pleased to see the Cabinet has now approved the Local Transport Plan 3 Update with regard to the Science Vale Area Strategy, in particular Proposal SV 2 which states "We will work with development partners to improve east-west journeys across the Science Vale area, connecting new homes with jobs and service centres, by better connecting Wantage and Grove with Didcot, Milton Park and Harwell" in particular I should like to refer to one of the key</p>	<p>COUCILLOR DAVID NIMMO SMITH, CABINET MEMBER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>I note the link made by the local Member between the provision of future bus services between Grove and the major employment sites and the situation that has existed since last December when Thames Travel withdrew their commercial bus services 32 and 36 between Grove and Harwell/Milton Park.</p> <p>These commercial services were withdrawn because of low patronage and a local meeting has been held with the Community to explore peoples' needs and other locally based community options. As part of the next stage another meeting has been scheduled for the end of April to undertake a Transport Audit.</p>

Questions	Answers
<p>bullet points which states :</p> <p>"Securing new bus services between new residential sites at Didcot, Wantage and Grove and the employment sites of Milton Park, Harwell and Oxford. A minimum standard of two buses per hour during the morning/evening peak travel periods is required to provide a credible level of service."</p> <p>Will this now mean that the Cabinet member will ensure that the public transport link between Grove and these major employment sites is now restored since the loss of those bus services last year?</p>	<p>The expansion of the strategic bus services network, envisaged under the Science Vale Area Strategy, will take place as new housing is built in the area and demand grows. Section 106 money is continuing to be secured to support new services before they become fully-commercial.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>My supplementary is that having sat last Thursday through the Cabinet Member decisions on the bus subsidies for the Witney area and having seen the hundreds and thousands of pounds being spent on the bus services in that area some of them to villages that somebody did even know where it was. Can I please see the transport audit for the Witney area bus subsidy to see how that money was being spent.</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>I am sure that will be available but speaking as an ex-transport cabinet member I can say that when we take into consideration all bus subsidies there is no favour given to any particular area and I would like to point out that Councillor Nimmo Smith is actually from South Oxfordshire so why he should be making any favours to another area I am not quite sure, but all I do know is the fact that when you are taking those decisions you have got all the information before you, the usage, how people are getting around and that is taken into consideration before anything is actually made. If I refer back to the original question of course, the service Councillor Patrick is referring to is a commercial service that was withdrawn it was the operators decision to withdraw that commercial service and that is where it lies with the operator. All bus subsidies really should be used to try and promote more bus usage and actually promote a good commercial service in the longer term.</p>

Questions	Answers
<p>22. COUNCILLOR RICHARD WEBBER</p> <p>Please would the cabinet member give the Council a brief update on the progress of moving Council staff and offices to Abbey House, Abingdon?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR NICK CARTER, CABINET MEMBER FOR BUSINESS & CUSTOMER SERVICES</p> <p>Good progress is being made with the project to relocate over 400 staff from Windrush Court and Foxcombe Court to co-locate with the Vale of White Horse District Council at Abbey House in Abingdon.</p> <p>Refurbishment works to Abbey House have now commenced through the Council's contractors Carillion, and it is anticipated that the staff from Windrush Court will move to Abbey House at the end of May, with staff from Foxcombe Court moving to Abbey House in phases during June and July.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>Could I first of all thank Councillor Carter for his very reassuring answer. However to my certain knowledge until last Friday evening not a single thing had happened in Abbey House, although the district council moved out of those offices some weeks ago. I am a little bit concerned that he or somebody within his department ought to be chasing up Carillion to check that they are on time with this because the prospect of Oxfordshire County Council and its hard pressed finances having to pay rent on two separate buildings at once is a pretty difficult thing to defend with the public and I hope you would agree with that.</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>Chairman, may I take the opportunity to thank Councillor Webber for his advice. He used the phrase to my certain knowledge not a thing has happened down there well I have been down there as you might expect and to my certain knowledge there is quite a lot happening down there and to my certain knowledge there will be even more happening down there over the next couple of months so hopefully I can reassure Councillor Webber and the Council that things are in hand.</p>